

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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11

ACTION EA-10

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R 060519Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1094

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

MEMBASSY JAKARTA 4321

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 2828

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: INTERIM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, ADVISORY COUNCIL OR REFERENDUM

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT DURING MAR 1 PRESS CONFERENCE ON
INTERIM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, ADVISORY COUNCIL AND REFERENDUM
CONFIRM OTHER INDICATIONS THAT PRESIDENT HAS NO INTENTION
OF CALLING ASSEMBLY. REFERENDUM NOW SEEMS ENTRENCHED AS
GOVERNMENT "CONSULTATIVE" INSTITUTION. ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT
INDICATED HE STILL TOYING WITH POSSIBILITY AT SOME LATER
DATE OF CREATING ADVISORY COUNCIL, HIS RE-ENTRENCHMENT BY

REFERENDUM AS NATION'S LEADER UNDER MARTIAL LAW PRESUMABLY
PLACES ADVISORY COUNCIL LOW ON LIST OF PRIORITIES. ASIDE
FROM FACT HE PREFERS NOT TO BE ENCUMBERED BY BODIES TO
WHICH HE HAS TO DEFER HOWEVER NOMINALLY, WE ASSUME HIS AD-
VISORS HAVE FAILED TO DISCOVER FORMULA THAT COULD CREATE
COUNCIL GUARANTEED FREE FROM TEMPTATIONS OF REVERSION TO
"OLD SOCIETY" POLITICS. TEXT OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
FOLLOWS:

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QUESTION: MR. PRESIDENT, YOU HAVE OFTEN SAID YOU

WOULD EVENTUALLY RETURN THIS GOVERNMENT TO PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WOULD BE SET UP. BUT NOW, YOU HAVE RECEIVED AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY WHICH GIVES YOU THE POWER TO APPOINT OFFICIALS. YOU TELL US FURTHER, TODAY, THAT THE REFERENDUM HAS NOW BEEN INSTITUTIONALIZED. DO YOU PLAN TO RETURN THE COUNTRY PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY?

ANSWER: FIRST OF ALL, I TAKE ISSUE WITH THE USE OF THE VERB "RETURN." WE NEVER HAD A PARLIAMENTARY FORM OF GOVERNMENT. THE NEW CONSTITUTION CHANGED OUR OLD PRESIDENTIAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT TO A SEMI-PARLIAMENTARY FORM. AS WE FINISH THE REFORM PHASE AND SHIFT TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION'S PROVISIONS ON THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT, THEN WE WOULD HAVE TO ADOPT THE SEMI-PARLIAMENTARY FORM WHICH IT HAS ORGANIZED. IN THE MEANTIME, THERE IS NOTHING TO PREVENT US FROM USING EITHER A LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COUNCIL OR THE REFERENDUM IN MATTERS OF LEGISLATION. HOWEVER, I GATHER THE PEOPLE FEEL THAT THE REASON THE CRISIS GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN SO EFFECTIVE IS BECAUSE IT HAS DONE AWAY WITH THE VACILLATION, THE COMPROMISES, AND THE CORRUPTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE SYSTEM. AND SO, FOR THE TIME BEING, WE SHOULD CONTINUE WITH THE PRESENT SET UP. WE ARE, OF COURSE, STUDYING THE ORGANIZATION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

QUESTION: COULD YOU GIVE US SOME INDICATION OF HOW SOON.....

ANSWER: WE CANNOT. WE MUST STUDY THIS.

QUESTION: MR. PRESIDENT, DO YOU HAVE ANY INTENTION OF CONVOKING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY?

ANSWER: IF WE HAD RECEIVED A "NO" VOTE IN THE REFERENDUM, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WOULD HAVE BEEN CONVOKED IMMEDIATELY. THE OVERWHELMING MANDATE WE RECEIVED SAID IN EFFECT, "DON'T CONVOKE."
SULLIVAN

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